Civilian Advance in Washington—*Bruce Catton*

THE Nation

November 19, 1949

CHINA

How the Communists Rule

BY ANDREW ROTH

The Case for Recognition

AN EDITORIAL

✠

Hollywood Gray List

BY CAREY McWILLIAMS

✠

G.O.P.—Nothing to Sell

BY ROBERT BENDINER

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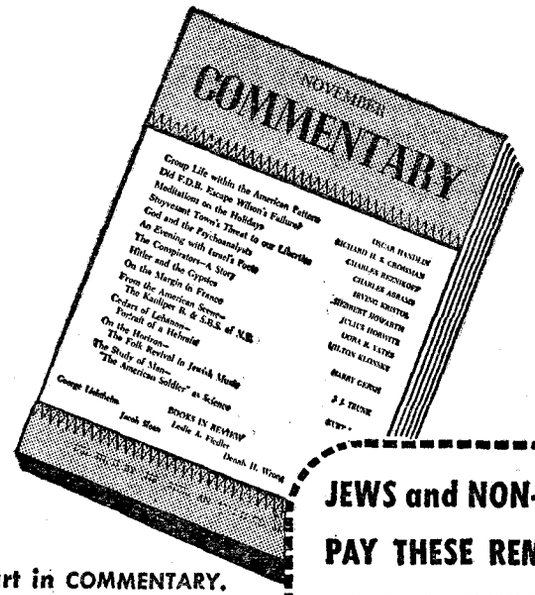

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THE Nation

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

VOLUME 169 NEW YORK • SATURDAY • NOVEMBER 19, 1949 NUMBER 21

The Shape of Things

EVEN IF MR. VISHINSHKY WAS INDULGING in a spree of tall-tale-telling when he announced that Russia at this moment is "razing mountains" and "irrigating deserts," his speeches last week had one sharply realistic aspect. They dramatized the fact that the core of Moscow's opposition to the majority atomic-control scheme lies in the proposal to put under international ownership and management the actual physical development of atomic-energy resources. If Russia has not yet melted mountains or opened waterways wider than the English Channel, it intends to hang on to the power to do so at its sovereign will. This determination was clearly put in Vishinsky's less theatrical second speech, delivered last Saturday, in which he told the Special Political Committee that Russia would not accept quota limits set by a U. N. control commission because its needs for atomic energy for peaceful purposes are tremendous and "growing." As for inspection of atomic resources and uses, Russia would permit periodic check-ups at agreed intervals but would not allow inspectors to stay on the ground continuously. In these two statements the wide division between the Soviet and majority position is made plain. The majority proposal to create an international body which would carry out continuous inspections, handle the mining of nuclear fuels, and operate all nuclear facilities is based on the uncontrovertible fact, pointed out by the American spokesman, Assistant Secretary of State Nickerson, that "if nations have devices . . . which can level mountains, they also have devices . . . which can level cities." He stressed, however, that quotas for each country would be set, not by the proposed international agency, as Mr. Vishinsky assumed, but in advance by the treaty establishing international control.

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WHAT CHANCE IS THERE OF FINDING ground for compromise on this central difference? The speeches of last week have weakened the modest hope expressed in General Rómulo's proposal that an atomic "truce" be declared during which Russia and America would quit making bombs and would agree not to use them, while a system of inspection would be set up to prevent violations. The assumption behind this suggestion was that the nuclear fuel available for peaceful purposes was likely to be too small in the foreseeable future to be a source of danger even if plants were operated by individual nations. But if Vishinsky's claims are even half true, the Rómulo plan would seem to rest on shaky foundations. On the other hand, no argument is likely to persuade the Soviet Union that international ownership, operation, inspection, and power to fix quotas will permit it to use the new source of energy for the immense development of its economy that would otherwise be possible; to accept the majority plan would be to accept international control of its future. If any system is to be set up, obviously something must "give." However grim the outlook, the Atomic Energy Commission will continue its discussions; to abandon the search for a solution would be in itself an unthinkable calamity. Meanwhile the Assembly, recognizing the huge obstacles that block acceptance of a long-range scheme, should consider seriously the various limited, tide-over suggestions introduced by Haiti, Argentina, India, and other delegations, including of course General Rómulo's truce proposals. For this plan is by no means ruled out, in spite of Vishinsky's revelations. A suspension of bomb-making would be a positive good, as would a temporary but absolute prohibition of the use of atomic weapons. At least such an agreement would provide a much-needed breathing space, and an atmosphere of hope, in which new approaches could be explored both by the commission and by the Assembly itself.

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IN CHOOSING OSCAR CHAPMAN TO REPLACE Julius A. Krug as Secretary of the Interior, President Truman's well-known addiction to placing political friends in high office coincides very well with the public interest. Not that Krug was a poor official but that Chapman is a uniquely good one. In spite of occasional suggestions to the contrary by former Secretary Harold L. Ickes, there is no evidence to indicate that Krug failed to administer his office competently and conscientiously, with particular attention to reclamation and public power. No one, however, could possibly have thought of Krug either as the sleepless watchdog of the public domain or as the conscience of the Administration, as millions thought of his cantankerous but invaluable predecessor, the "Old Curmudgeon." While the immediate cause of his resignation remains a confidence between himself and the President, it is com-

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The Nation, published weekly and copyright, 1949, in the U. S. A. by The Nation Associates, Inc., 20 Vesey St., New York 7, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1879, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Advertising and Circulation Representative for Continental Europe: Publicitas.
Subscription Prices: Domestic—One year $7; Two years $12; Three years $17. Additional postage per year; Foreign and Canadian $1.
Change of Address: Three weeks' notice is required for change of address, which cannot be made without the old address as well as the new.
Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Index to Labor Articles, Public Affairs Information Service, Dramatic Index

mon knowledge that relations between the two men have been cool ever since the 1948 election campaign, in the course of which a leading columnist wrote, "Krug is supposedly campaigning for Truman in the West. . . . But thus far it is a secret campaign, since no word of it seems to have leaked out to the press." Chapman, on the other hand, has been an ardent New Dealer ever since 1933. A firm believer in public power, conservation, and reclamation projects to benefit the small farmer, he was a peerless lieutenant to Mr. Ickes. His appointment will bring no comfort to men like Senator Downey, who have long waged a vendetta against the Interior Department on behalf of California's great corporate landowners. Chapman took a leading role in Mr. Truman's fight for reelection last year, working hardest when the prospect was darkest. If he is now receiving his political reward, it is at least a reward from which the country as a whole stands to profit greatly.

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HOW DOTH THE BUSY BOOK-BURNER IMPROVE each shining hour! The self-appointed censors have certainly spent an energetic autumn, after a sort of curtain-raiser in late July when the news leaked out that "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" had quietly been dropped from the New York City public-school system's list of approved textbooks as long ago as 1947—ostensibly because it was out of print. (The Harper textbook edition, for reasons unexplained, *is* out of print, but a twelve-cent-cheaper Grosset and Dunlap edition is not. There is also a very nice Pocket Books edition for 25 cents.) At last report, Superintendent of Schools Jansen was "investigating" the charge that Mark Twain's classic—read in or out of school by many millions of Americans since its appearance in 1889—is being kept off the school shelves today because its thrusts at the medieval clergy are too sharp to suit contemporary representatives of the Holy See. Some weeks later an earnest but misguided taxpayer went to the courts to force the New York City Board of Education to drop "Oliver Twist" and "The Merchant of Venice" from the school libraries because of their "anti-Semitism." His suit was wisely dismissed by Supreme Court Justice Anthony J. Di Giovanna, who asserted that "public education and instruction in the home will remove religious and racial intolerance more effectively than censorship and suppression of literary works which have been accepted as works of art and which are not per se propaganda against or for any race." In this case, interestingly enough, the appellant cited the ban on *The Nation* as a precedent for the action he sought, while the attorney for the Board of Education, somewhat to the consternation of the school authorities, attacked the ban in arguing for the admission of Charles Dickens and William Shakespeare.

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CENSORSHIP NEXT MOVED SOUTHWEST TO Houston, Texas, where the school board ruled out Dr. Frank Magruder's widely respected civics text, "American Government," because it included these lines:

> The United States is called a capitalistic country, but it does not have pure capitalism. It has capitalism subject to increasing governmental control as our manner of living becomes more complex. The country is capitalistic with strong socialistic and even communistic trends. The postal system, power projects, and progressive taxes are bits of socialism; and public free education and old-age assistance are examples of communism.

When a child reads about the post office and the like, said one of the members of the board, "he'll think they're good and he might think socialism and communism are good." We are happy to learn, however, that "American Government" is still an approved text in the New York City schools. But in mid-October the censors struck again. In Scarsdale, New York, the heart of comfortable suburbia, a volunteer "Committee of Ten" (with only nine members) demanded that libraries and classrooms be purged of the writings of Howard Fast, Shirley Graham, Anna Louise Strong, and other "Communists or Communist apologists." Happily for Scarsdale, and for free thought, eighty-one leaders of the community, including Charles E. Wilson, president of General Electric, signed a letter strongly opposing the proposal, and fought for their principles last week at a meeting of the Scarsdale Board of Education. As a result, the board rejected the committee's motion with an excellent statement which concluded: "Protection against subversive influences can best be achieved by the positive approach of vigorous teaching, rather than by negative methods of repressive censorship. Truth is to be found through open doors."

China's Recognition

WHILE no hint of a change in our Chinese policy has come from official sources, it is evident that recognition of the Chinese Communist government cannot be long delayed. The question was one of the main items on the agenda of the recent Foreign Ministers' meetings in Paris, where British pressure for recognition was undoubtedly strong. Certainly Britishers of all shades of opinion, most of all British nationals in China, have been urging the establishment of normal relations with the new Peking government.

With huge interests in China, the British are not lightly tossing away any opportunity to expand trade. Furthermore, they are infuriated by the Nationalist blockade, and they find that the royal navy cannot be used effectively to protect shipping unless they break off relations with Chiang. Declaring that early recognition of the Communists is inevitable, the London *Spectator* points out:

> A united, peaceful, and prosperous China is as much a British interest as the security of Hongkong; and the fact that it happens to have been united under a Communist dictatorship, which is a form of government we much dislike, need not prevent us from wishing it peace and prosperity.

To such arguments the State Department can have no effective rejoinder. Its own White Paper bristles with evidence of the bankruptcy of the Nationalist regime. Moreover, the three conditions for recognition set forth by the department on October 3 have been substantially met. At that time it was stated that we would defer recognition of the new government until "it shall appear (1) that it is in possession of the machinery of the state; (2) administering the government with the assent of the people thereof and without resistance to its authority; and (3) that it is in a position to fulfil all the international obligations and responsibilities incumbent upon a sovereign state under treaties and international law." The Chinese Communist government has now been formally set up and its power extended over the entire country except for a few pockets in the remote southwest. It obviously enjoys far greater popular support than the Nationalists. In spite of an increase in anti-Western feeling and some individual hostile acts directed against foreigners, including American consular officials, which the State Department has properly protested, the general moderation of the new government and the absence of those excesses which have marked previous Chinese revolutions seem to guarantee fulfilment of the third condition.

Like the British, American business men want recognition so that they can resume normal trade. The only real obstacle is an obvious psychological by-product of the cold war. A vociferous group in Congress, supported by a large sector of public opinion, argues that recognition of the new Chinese government would encourage the cause of communism throughout the world and open the whole of Asia to Russian penetration. Those who hold this view ignore the realities of the Chinese and the general Far Eastern situation. We do no service to the interests of either democracy or the American people by abandoning China.

Because of its immense resources and traditional friendship for China the United States is in a peculiarly favorable position to aid in rebuilding the country and thereby to overcome the hostility caused by our backing of the corrupt and unpopular Kuomintang regime. Our relations to Asia as a whole are also involved. The Chinese revolution is part of a gigantic social upheaval which has been stimulated to a considerable degree by the spread of American equalitarian ideals. If we fail to recognize the new Chinese government, we are

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likely to forfeit much of the prestige thus gained, for Asia can only interpret such action as an attempt to suppress the legitimate aspirations of the popular revolution. By default we should be providing Moscow with an opportunity to grasp the leadership of the greatest social movement of modern times. Recognition is bound to come ultimately, but each day by which it is delayed diminishes the moral and political advantages which might be gained by prompt action.

Pensions Reconsidered

NOW that the steel workers have won old-age pensions without making any visible contributions from their wages, it is pertinent to raise a few questions of basic policy. The unions have drifted into this system naturally enough in their usual pragmatic way. While there were war-time ceilings on wages, "fringe issues" became a good means of obtaining concessions that would satisfy the union members' desire for gains. Petrillo and his musicians, followed by Lewis and his miners, exacted the payment of spectacular benefits in the form of large welfare or pension funds for which their employers acted as tax-gatherers through royalties on the product. The steel settlements contain no such explicit provisions for collecting the contributions from consumers, and few have paused to consider what will be the long-term influence of this rapidly spreading fashion on the unions themselves and on the economy as a whole.

There is no question that adequate old-age pensions are a social necessity. The federal social-security system obviously does not provide them, even when supplemented by additional grants of old-age assistance from the more generous states. Eligibility to the pension is hedged about by qualifications which exclude large sections of the population. The maximum payment now obtainable is about $45 a month, and many do not receive as much as this. The pension cannot be granted, moreover, when the prospective recipient does any work for which he earns more than $15 a month; therefore it cannot be supplemented materially except from savings, charity, or local and private systems. Even the revision now proposed by the Administration does little more than widen the coverage and increase the benefit to accord with the rise in the cost of living since the passage of the measure.

The absence of any sufficient public system is an invitation to unions to get what they can by any means open to them. Employers and conservative politicians who attack the "welfare state"—in which social security is the most prominent component—are in effect saying to wage-earners, "Get your pensions from private industry." That is what the unions are now engaged in doing.

Back in the 1920's "welfare capitalism" was as bitterly attacked by labor spokesmen as the welfare state is attacked now by spokesmen of employers. Then pensions, among other things, were introduced by some large employers to stimulate the loyalty of the worker and make him more reluctant to change or lose his job. This made it harder for the unions to get a foothold and increased the hesitation of employees to strike. Though the unions are now more powerful than then, does a pension obtained by collective bargaining render the individual worker any less dependent on his employer than a pension voluntarily granted? May it not tend to draw the union itself within the influence of private paternalism?

What about the hazards of payments which must stop if the employer gets into trouble? In the depression following the 1920's many a worker whose security had rested on the ability of a single company to compensate him for old age, sickness, unemployment, or other misfortune found himself without resources because his employer had failed, or because the insurance funds collapsed with the collapse of the securities in which they were invested. Who knows whether the steel, coal, or any other companies will be able for a long and uninterrupted period of years to continue to pay the agreed amounts into the funds now set up? In steel the danger is even greater, because the agreements are with individual companies.

Lewis's pension fund for the miners has been forced to suspend payments even during a period of prosperity. Employers have charged that the actuarial calculations according to which the payments were arranged are at fault. Lewis himself asserts that the cause is the failure of the Southern operators to continue to make payments into the fund in the absence of a union contract. If so, he has given them a powerful bargaining weapon. Union members contemplating a strike in the future will know that they may forgo not only their wages but their future security and the payments to their aged.

The inequality of employers' capacity to pay constitutes still another hazard. Some industries are less profitable than others and in any given industry some employers make more profit than others. Will the unions accept differences in security according to the circumstances of the various employers? They have not as a rule followed this policy on wages and hours. In so far as they do follow it in this case, security will depend,

Next Week in The Nation

One Third of a World

A Startling Reappraisal of This Country's "Good Neighbor" Policy

By BERNARD MISHKIN

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not on need or deserts, but on good fortune, as in the past. If, on the other hand, all the companies pay the same benefits, the cost must be charged to the consumer by higher prices, since the employer with little or no profit cannot afford to pay it, and what he must charge will set the price for his competitors, so long as he can sell at all. This will mean a higher cost of living or less employment.

Such a consideration may be unimportant when only one or a few unions gain the concession, but if it goes to all workers, they will be charging it against themselves, whether the plan is formally non-contributory or not. No doubt those who are earning wages may justly decide to support those who no longer have the ability to earn, but the workers should not deceive themselves that a general pension system paid by flat employer contributions per worker or per hour will in the end be levied against excessive profits.

[*In a future issue* The Nation *will continue this discussion, outlining the sort of proposal it believes organized labor should consider.*]

Civilian Advance

BY BRUCE CATTON

Washington, November 14

BEST news of the fall is that peace-minded civilians seem to be regaining control over United States foreign policy. Military dominance is ending; the Administration is no longer bound by the "we must fight Russia tomorrow" complex. The President, of course, has been peace-minded all along, and his very choice of Mr. Acheson as Secretary of State represented a setback for the inevitable-conflict school. The new element is the recent reorganization in the State Department, which is at last making it possible for these two men to carry out their wishes.

In all the discussion of United States foreign policy since the war, too little attention has been paid to the fact that the Department of State was simply incompetent to do what had to be done. It was organized on an obsolete system of water-tight compartments. Coordination of effort was impossible unless the Secretary himself took charge of administrative routine. It used to be complained that the department was in the Secretary's hat, that when the Secretary was away the department couldn't operate, and that was a fairly good description of the way things were organized. With a new world taking shape and problems of tremendous magnitude coming up for settlement, the department was ideally fitted to handle the foreign affairs of the U. S. Grant Administration.

On top of that, the career boys who dominated the department were firmly opposed to any fundamental change. As far as they were concerned, foreign policy was still a matter of correct protocol and relations with the heads of states. The tremendous responsibilities of the post-war era were frightening. They preferred to stay in shallow water.

The result was disastrous because time refused to stand still. The department's incompetence left a vacuum which did not remain unfilled. Since the things State refused or was unable to do had to be done, other people did them—and, doing them, exercised control. The Secretary might confer with foreign ministers and attend conferences, but the operations which determined the course of affairs were directed elsewhere. All too often they were directed by men who feel that anything goes so long as we lick Russia.

When the late Edward R. Stettinius was Secretary, he made two stabs at reorganization, and under Byrnes one was made by the Bureau of the Budget. The problem was not seriously tackled, however, until Secretary Marshall assigned Deputy Under Secretary Peurifoy to the task of bringing the department up to date so that it could really operate. This project, finally, is beginning to pay off.

The old water-tight compartments have been broken down, and the Secretary has been relieved of detail. The various Assistant Secretaries have the authority they need; the resources of the department can now be drawn on for any problem without personal interventions from on high being necessary. To be sure, the new machinery is still imperfect, but it is beginning to be possible for real, working control of foreign policy to be centered where it belongs—in the hands of the President and the Secretary of State.

One sign of this change can be found in the department's plans for the President's Point Four program—which, if it goes through, may easily be America's most important post-war operation. The department is working hard on this project because it intends to run it. Previously, it definitely did not want such assignments; it shied away from E. C. A., for instance, on the ground that the job was too big.

The rise of peace-mindedness is symbolized by the President's recent announcement that the government would not spend the extra $615,000,000 which Congress voted for the air force. The President said that he based his decision, which betokens a definite turn-away from a seventy-group air force, not on the need to save money, but on the importance of keeping our military program in balance. Since the program was obviously unbalanced by the seventy-group plan, he has probably decided against the whole Douhet concept of an irresistible air arm which could enforce American wishes anywhere on earth by blitz warfare.

But precisely that concept is basic to the carefully

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cultivated notion that war with Russia is both inevitable and imminent, not to mention somehow desirable. If we are going to fight Russia in the near future we *have* to rely on an aerial blitz. Unless nothing that happens in Washington makes any sense at all—a tempting notion now and then but hardly a sound one—here is the clearest possible sign that the Administration is banking on a peaceful end to the cold war. And it is beginning to get a State Department through which it will have some chance of reaching its goals.

POLITICS and PEOPLE

G. O. P.—Nothing to Sell

BY ROBERT BENDINER

THANKS to John Foster Dulles, the voters of New York learned this fall that the "welfare state" is something real and is what the Democrats have been giving them, nationally, these past seventeen years. They learned, too, that "anti-statism" is something hazy and negative, and that, whatever it is, it can be had by electing Republicans. They appear to have concluded, reasonably enough, that there was no point in exchanging something for nothing. And that, basically, is how Herbert H. Lehman became a Senator.

Of course, this is an oversimplification of what happened in New York on November 8. There were other factors in Lehman's triumph—the political unity of labor, closer than it has ever been, Dulles's blundering offense to racial groups in New York City, and the Democratic candidate's great personal prestige. But there is enough truth in the foregoing interpretation to give Republican strategists one of those nightmares from which no escape seems possible. Last year, under the guidance of Tom Dewey, they promised to go on giving the public just about everything it had been getting from the party in power, and the skeptical voters said, in effect: Then why should we make the change? This year, in the one contest of national importance, they promised, instead, to limit the largess of government and preserve us all in Jeffersonian simplicity. Whereas Dewey had at least carried New York State a year ago, Dulles was soundly trounced and returned to Wall Street. All of which raises the question of whether the Republicans have anything to look forward to in the future except to join the turkey as the annual November sacrifice.

Before considering this interesting question it might be well to square the results of the November 8 around-the-country balloting against the check list contained in this column two weeks ago. In the main there can be no question that the Democratic tide is still running strong. The results as a whole are reminiscent of the off-year elections of 1947, to which neither the G. O. P. nor the political experts paid anything like sufficient attention. That was the year in which dozens of local governments switched from Republican to Democrat, principally in Indiana, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Washington. A year later came the deluge. This year the trend continues. Traditional Republican strongholds in upstate New York, such as Schenectady, Syracuse, Rome, Ithaca, Geneva, and Binghamton, went over to the opposition. In Rochester the solidly Republican city council was breached by two Democrats. More startling, the Philadelphia city government, for fifty years a bulwark of G. O. P. patronage (and corruption), was pentrated by militant Democrats, spearheaded by Richardson Dilworth and Joseph S. Clark, both leaders in Americans for Democratic Action and both subjected to a frantic barrage of red-baiting throughout a feverish campaign. Cleveland and Pittsburgh returned Fair Deal Democrats to their respective City Halls by overwhelming majorities. And California's Fifth Congressional District filled the seat of the late Richard J. Welch, a liberal Republican, with John F. Shelley, a Democrat and former president of the California Federation of Labor.

The New York mayoralty race is in a class by itself, and the results can be used to prove such varied and conflicting theses that they prove none of them conclusively. Superficially the discrepancy between the Republican vote for Dulles in the city (795,707) and the Republican vote for Newbold Morris (571,071) indicates that nearly a quarter of a million Republicans knifed their nominee for Mayor. Closer examination, however, shows that Morris actually ran well ahead of candidates for lesser office on his ticket. This might well mean that Morris did not get less than his share of Republican votes but that Dulles got more than his share, a probability heightened by the fact that Lehman ran behind his ticket in the city. The inference to be drawn from this shift is that, even though Cardinal Spellman called off his initial opposition to Lehman, there was still a measurable Catholic defection from Democratic ranks. At the same time Morris, who openly supported the Barden bill, probably lost votes in the same quarter.

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Superficially running against the tide were the results in Buffalo, Detroit, and New Jersey, but in each case special factors operated to deprive them of any great significance. A large percentage of Buffalo's Polish American voters, normally Democratic, shifted to the G. O. P. line to elect the first nominee of their stock ever to be put up for the mayoralty by a major party. At that, many of them must have split their ballots, since Lehman carried the city, although narrowly. In Detroit George Edwards, favored by the C. I. O. and A. D. A., came a cropper, but here, in contrast to the picture in New York, labor was sharply divided. Edwards's opponent, Albert E. Cobo, enjoyed the support of the American Federation of Labor and some segments of the Democratic Party as well, municipal elections in that city being non-partisan.

Such comfort as the Republicans can extract from last Tuesday's proceedings they get from New Jersey, where Governor Alfred E. Driscoll was elected to a second term. Actually the Jersey results go far to confirm the thesis that liberalism is still the voters' choice, whatever the party label. I cannot view Driscoll as the La Follette of his day—his liberalism probably stops short of that of such fellow-Republicans as Aiken, Tobey, and Morse—yet he has been good on civil rights, he has put through some progressive social legislation, and his campaign was in every way more intelligent and more enlightened than that of Dulles. More important, perhaps, was the fact that he was fighting the final effort of Frank Hague to return to swag and glory. Labor took little part in the campaign, and it is shedding no tears over Driscoll's election, though the C. I. O. political arm is expected to work for a reconstructed Democratic Party, now that Hague is through for good. It is worth noting, by the way, that along with the passing of Hague and the cracking of the Philadelphia Republican machine, the Curley era in Boston also came to an end on November 8. The Boss's successor is a completely undistinguished Democrat, but Bostonians have been notoriously undemanding, not to say indulgent, in their choice of executives.

MR. DULLES, the Senator ad interim, as Harold Ickes calls him, advances a curious argument to explain his defeat. "The Democratic Party," he says, "could never have won unless it had the support of the Liberal Party and the undercover support of the Communist Party." It is statistically obvious that the Liberal Party's statewide vote of 424,587 put Lehman across, since he won by less than 200,000, and the party is indeed in a position to do some crowing. In 1945, 1946, and 1948 it accounted for a little more than 6 per cent of the New York City vote; this year it took in 14 per cent of the city vote for Mayor and 16.7 for Senator. But why this should be cited by Dulles is hard to imagine. If the Liberal Party should dissolve tomorrow, the great bulk of its membership would in future elections turn up in the Democratic column in state and national elections, if not municipal. Since it stands for the Fair Deal and more of it, Dulles's comment was an unwitting recognition that sentiment for the "welfare state" is on the increase. The reference to the Communists was the same shoddy stuff the Republican statesman tried to peddle during the campaign. Marcantonio directed his followers to forget the Senate race entirely, and they appear to have done just that. If they had voted for Lehman, their ballots would have been more than enough to offset the Catholic defection, and Lehman would not have finished below his Democratic running-mates. It is worth noting, too, that more than 200,000 city voters cast ballots for Mayor and not for Senator, indicating that Marcantonio's injunction was faithfully executed.

Elsewhere in high Republican circles the reactions to November 8 are less amateur but little more convincing than Dulles's. Dewey's thesis is that the Lehman margin of 196,000 represents a "setback and not a gain" for the Fair Deal, though he himself carried the state for the Republicans last year by 47,165. Guy Gabrielson, Republican national chairman, is for more of the Dulles technique, rather than less, on the ground that the "principles . . . expounded in his campaign are those which will ultimately prevail because they are right," a view echoed by Senator Taft. Harold Stassen, on the other hand, admits that the party is "in a bad way" and will require "a tremendous lot of rebuilding," though he is against "me-too-ism." Senator Lodge sees hope in the Driscoll victory, which "shows the Republicans can win when they have a modern approach and an affirmative program."

My own jaundiced view is that this was precisely the division that obtained in the G. O. P. high command after the great débâcle of 1948, and there is not the slightest indication that it has been resolved. Unless we have an economic crash and a full-blown depression, I see last week's balloting as a forerunner of Democratic victory next year and, with farm prices holding up, in 1952. Of course the Republicans can always take comfort in the "tidal theory" of American politics, which has given us, historically, an alternating succession of advance and consolidation, of liberalism and conservatism. But what few observers recall is that the tide was with the G. O. P. from 1937 through 1946, with Roosevelt and the war preventing it from engulfing the White House. The reverse set in only two years ago and would appear to have quite a while yet to run. Unless Gabrielson and company have something more appealing up their sleeve than "anti-statism," they may as well train their sights on, say, 1956. That might be their year.

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How the Communists Rule

BY ANDREW ROTH

Shanghai, October

WHEN Communist troops were closing in on Shanghai last May, a newspaperman said to me: "I intend to stay and watch Shanghai corrupt the Communists." Today it is clear that their "Shanghai experience" has not affected the Communists, unless to make them even more revolutionary, but a leaner, harder Shanghai awaits Western recognition.

Shanghai residents were first impressed by the strict discipline of the Communist troops. Exhausted with marching as they were, they slept on the hard pavements rather than impose on the citizens and insisted on paying for everything, even hot water. The industry and austerity of the Communist political workers also stood out conspicuously. High and low started work at eight and continued late into the night—on two frugal meals. They pruned the dead wood out of overstaffed government offices. They tackled the widespread corruption with a most un-Chinese energy. The Military Control Commission, headed by the French-educated General Chen Yi, began almost immediately to get rid of Shanghai's excess population by offering 500,000 refugees and unemployed free transportation to their native towns or farms. Because the Kuomintang had stripped the rivers of steamers, a fleet of sampans was mobilized to bring in food. Factory-owners were pleased by the Communists' production consciousness, so lacking in the Kuomintang. Business men found their export-import regulations practical and fair.

All groups in the population benefited from the check administered to the runaway inflation. The Communists called in foreign exchange at a reasonable rate and banned silver-coin speculators. They stabilized wages by gearing them to food and dumped food supplies to keep prices low. They made it possible for people to bank their savings in adjustable "realistic deposits," calculated in terms of purchasing power. By mid-June the Communist *Jen-min-piao* was stabilized at 1,800 to the United States dollar, and Shanghai residents had the unusual experience of seeing the price of some commodities decline.

For most people these practical virtues outweighed the Communist vice of controlling information. Here as elsewhere the Communists made sure that everybody learned about the advantages of the "new democracy"; the press was "free" only to support the "people's revolution." Just as under the Kuomintang, all opposition newspapers were suppressed.

Foreigners were irritated by the heavy-handed propaganda which depicted all Anglo-American actions as "imperialist plots" and all Soviet and satellite activities as manifestations of "peace and democracy," but they were impressed by the Communists' prudence and moderation and their apparent desire to make Shanghai a bridge to economic cooperation with the West. After dealing with them the American manager of one of Shanghai's biggest utilities said, "Don't ask me how I feel about the Communists. If I told you, you would think I was a red." The British-owned *North China Daily News* said, "The promise of better conditions, emphasized by the behavior of the new authorities, is like a breath of fresh air in a place where it was wanted for all too long."

THE harmony and progress of the first three weeks were ended by the Kuomintang blockade. From the outset shipping was scarce, the retreating Nationalists having seized every vessel in the port; they even burned a million-dollar fleet of fishing boats supplied by UNRRA. The ship shortage was accentuated by an erroneous report that mines had been laid at the mouth of the Yangtze. No one would risk a valuable ship in mined waters for the small profit obtainable. Minesweeping operations soon showed that the channel was clear, but meanwhile stocks of raw materials had fallen perilously low. The Communists were furious that imaginary mines had stopped their much-needed imports and suspended the *North China Daily News* for three days for having published the rumor.

The Kuomintang, inspired by the effect of this imagined blockade, announced that the port would be closed from June 26 on. To show they meant business, five days before the deadline they bombed the British-owned Anchises. An American tanker carrying a forty-six-day supply of fuel for the Shanghai Power Company headed back to Hongkong. Neither the British nor the United States government recognized the blockade's validity, but British and American insurance companies helped to enforce it. Skyrocketing insurance rates were more effective than the Kuomintang's few warships and planes in keeping blockade-runners out of Shanghai during the next months.

At the end of July the worst typhoon in thirty years swept the city, rendering 200,000 people homeless and endangering the area's September rice crop. The block-

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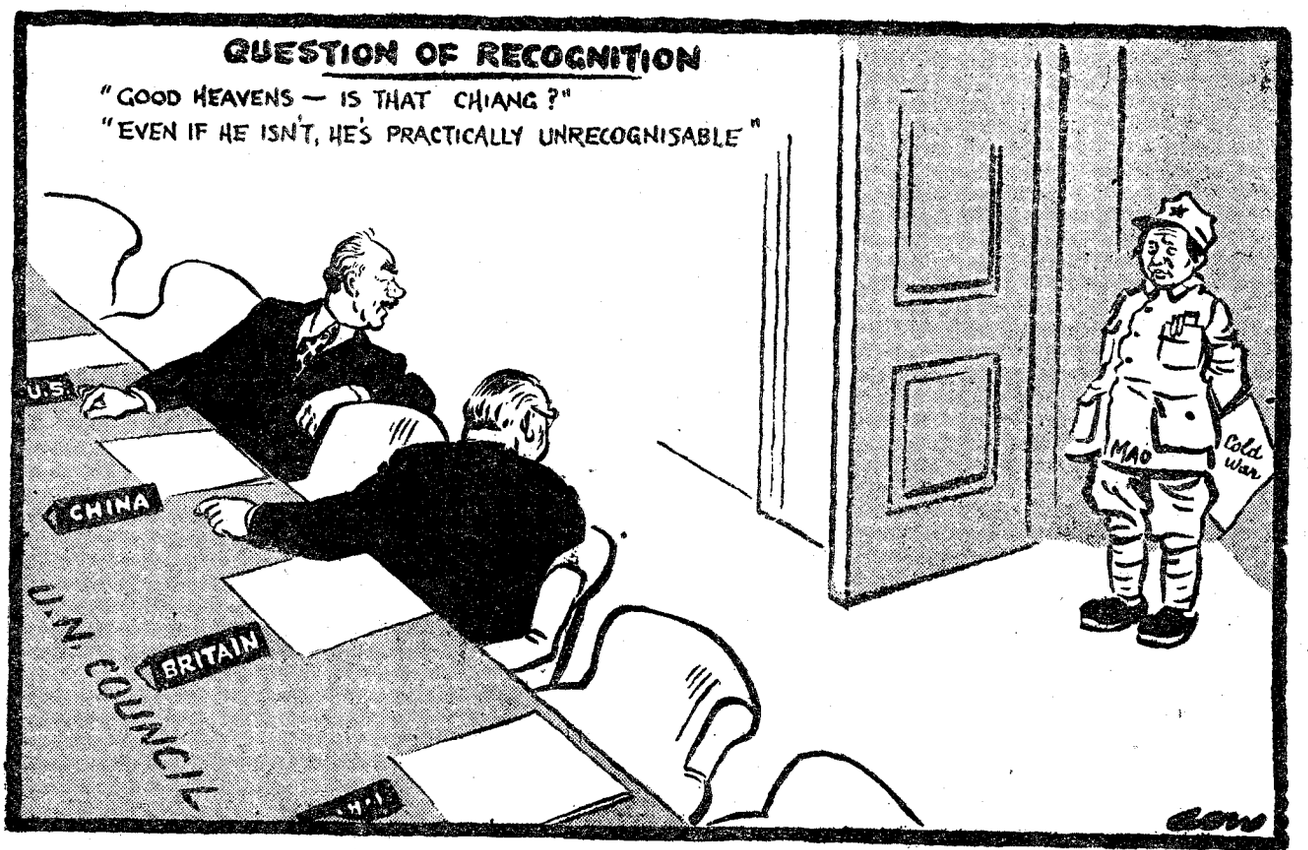
ade and typhoon together, heightening the dislocating effects of a revolutionary change of power, brought Shanghai to the verge of economic chaos. Soon half of the factories were closed and most of the rest were working part time. Inflation began again, and by mid-September the Communists had to print $500 and $1,000 bills for the first time. They were also forced to call on the citizens to "let three people's rice be shared by five." To conserve petroleum products they boosted the price of gasoline to $3 (U. S.) a gallon and slapped on an automobile tax of $50 a month. Some ten thousand car owners turned in their licenses.

"Soaking the rich" to finance Shanghai through its depression, the Communists soon rubbed the glitter off that gaudy town. Property owners found it hard to meet a multiplied land tax. Lawyers were hard hit by the new and informed People's Courts. Hordes of venal "middle men" and "go-betweens" were put out of business. The luxury shops of Bubbling Well Road had to shift from opulent silks to plebeian household necessities. The stoppage of raw-material imports cut into production just when wages, geared to imported rice, rose sharply from about $15 to $30 a month. But it was difficult to lay off workers who demanded six months' severance pay and locked in employers who resisted.

In the labor troubles which now broke out the Communists followed a hands-off policy, although they had promised to "protect both capital and labor." A factory operator came close to the truth when he declared that the Communists were "more afraid of labor than of the Kuomintang." The Shanghai workers naturally expected great things of this self-proclaimed "workers' party," and the Communists were unwilling to oppose or disillusion them before they were firmly in control. Not until the end of August did they feel secure enough to tell the workers they must pull in their belts and to impose regulations which almost suspended the right to strike and otherwise protected employers against excessive claims.

THE blockade compelled the Communists to plan to make Shanghai "face inward," toward China, instead of depending on vulnerable imports. The city, they decided, must halve its population to a "productive" three million. Cotton-textile mills would be moved closer to the cotton fields as soon as inland power supplies could be developed. Meanwhile the production of cotton and other raw materials was to be expanded and their shipment to Shanghai expedited. Shanghai's factories were to concentrate on production essential to China, such as agricultural implements, pumps, fertilizers, and insecticides, at prices the impoverished Chinese farmer could afford.

Although the blockade was entirely a Kuomintang invention, its indorsement by United States Republican Senators and reports that the State Department had discouraged Northwest Airlines from serving Shanghai apparently convinced the Communists that it was an imperialist plot. Chou En-lai, Communist Premier and



London *Evening Standard*

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Foreign Minister, laid down the line when he asserted that it was conducted by "American imperialism and Kuomintang reactionaries" and warned that it might last eight years. Thinking their situation comparable to the early blockaded days of the U. S. S. R., the Communists strengthened their bonds with the Soviets and took a new "tough line" toward the Anglo-Americans. In the middle of July they shut down the information services of Great Britain and the United States, contending that embassies without formal diplomatic status could not publish propaganda. They also tightened up on foreign correspondents, censoring dispatches on military matters. After September 1 all foreign news agencies were forbidden to distribute their bulletins. The *North China Daily News*, however, was allowed to monitor Reuter's radio news service.

ONE sign of the Communists' lessening moderation toward foreigners was the way the small incidents between Chinese and foreigners which have always been common here were played up. The Communists used these incidents to show Shanghai citizens how fortunate they were to be "liberated" from the "Anglo-American imperialists" with their "foreign privileges." Whether White Russian girls were alleged to have beaten up a Chinese beggar or an American was accused of ordering his dog to bite a pedicab driver, the "imperialists" were invariably found to be at fault and compelled, at the very least, to publish abject apologies.

On July 6 United States Vice-Consul William Olive unwittingly violated a new traffic regulation. The police, apparently on orders from higher up, proceeded to give him the "imperialist" treatment. Mr. Olive, "while vigorously asserting his rights as an American official" (according to the State Department), upset an inkwell and (according to the Communists) damaged one officer's wrist watch and another's fountain pen. Taking this for an act of resistance, soldiers beat him, handcuffed him, and put him in a cell on bread and water. The following morning he was compelled to write a confession of guilt. Tried for eight offenses, he was lectured on the sins of American policy, fined the equivalent of $20, and forced to bow low in apology while being photographed. Before being released he had to write that his "confession" was voluntary and that he had "suffered no injuries while under detention." The State Department protested indignantly against the "inhuman treatment" accorded Mr. Olive. The Communists retorted that he had behaved "arrogantly and savagely in an imperialist manner, taking the attitude of a master as American vice-consuls treated Kuomintang reactionaries in the past. The people have become masters in liberated Shanghai, and the People's Government will not allow foreign nationals to insult and ride roughshod over the people."

FOREIGN-OWNED firms have suffered greatly from labor troubles because they are among the wealthiest in the city and because the Communists' anti-imperialist propaganda has made Shanghai's always anti-foreign laborers think that it was "open season" on Anglo-American employers. The disputes in which the Shanghai *Evening Post* and the United States navy were involved have received worldwide attention. Although publicized as questions of press freedom and diplomatic privilege, both were primarily labor disputes complicated by a revolutionary situation.

The *Evening Post* was owned by the C. V. Starr interests and edited by Randall Gould. Like other firms it was accustomed to labor crises on the fortnightly pay day as a result of the runaway inflation. On June 15 Mr. Gould's labor force locked him in because he refused wage increases and bonuses. Thereupon Mr. Gould announced that he would shut down the paper, ostensibly because it could no longer pay its way, though later he said it was because the workers did not accept his "sole and unquestioned authority"—they had argued over one word in an editorial on the strike. The *Post's* employees, some with twenty years' service, continued to print the progressive *China Weekly Review* at the *Post* plant and campaigned to have publication of the *Post* resumed. One day several workers forced their way into the Gould apartment and were slightly injured when they were thrown out. The Communist police forced the Goulds to publish an apology. The workers then demanded not only their back pay but to have their wages continued until the paper's closing was definitely settled. When Mr. Gould refused to yield, they locked him in again, for two days, on a diet of tea and wafers to show him what they had to live on. Finally the authorities stepped in and permitted the now thoroughly infuriated Mr. Gould to close the paper on the payment of about six months' severance pay.

The same lock-in technique was used against the United States government. When the navy left Shanghai somewhat precipitately in April, it paid off some 800 locally hired Chinese and Sikhs with a month's pay in lieu of two weeks' notice This is customary procedure with the American government but not customary here, where larger severance pay is expected. In an ugly temper the Chinese and Sikh workers locked in three consular officials for almost five days. Then the Labor Bureau induced the workers to accept about three months' severance pay, from $50 to $100 apiece, instead of the six months' demanded. The United States government protested about both these cases, charging that the use of "weapons of hunger, thirst, and mental anguish" was contrary to Communist promises to protect foreign lives and property.

By September 1 the Communists had apparently decided that they had overplayed their "tough line." New

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labor regulations curbed riotous tactics, and lock-ins of foreign employers stopped. As a sign of the new relaxed attitude functionaries began to speak fluent English to Anglo-American applicants for exit visas instead of compelling them to bring interpreters. By that time, however, many American business men and consular officials were ready to pull out of Shanghai and slam the door on trade with Communist China. A large number were evacuated on the General Gordon, which left Shanghai in September. The State Department has indicated a similar attitude by closing down various consulates in Communist-occupied cities.

The British, though similarly harassed, are more inclined to stick it out. They have a much larger investment, and they cannot afford to lose it. During the depression caused by the blockade British firms have been bringing in an estimated £500,000 monthly to pay their deficits. Since they cannot do this for long, they have exerted considerable pressure on London to have the blockade lifted or broken. The British government, fearful of losing the China market, has listened sympathetically: British warships have been assigned to escort blockade runners, and the Nationalists have been warned not to fire on British ships. Ernest Bevin has apparently told Dean Acheson that China's continued economic isolation will not only hurt Britain's trade position but push China still farther into the arms of Russia. Now that the Soviets have recognized the Chinese People's Republic, British recognition may not be far behind.

Hollywood Gray List

BY CAREY McWILLIAMS

Los Angeles, November 9

IT HAS always been difficult to take Hollywood seriously, and an observer of the scene today can scarcely believe that the familiar surface gaiety conceals currents of real fear. Fear of the black list is strong, but a more widespread and probably better-founded fear is that of the gray list.

Mr. X, a famous actor whose services were once in great demand, is now hard up. During Hollywood's vociferous "anti-fascist" phase he was active in political affairs, and at that time the studios did not appear to be annoyed by his extra-curricular interests. Today, although he gets work occasionally, he feels he is on a black list. His agent, friends "on the lot," the gossip columnists, and others tell him, however, that he is only on the gray list—the list of those political offenders who are, so to speak, on probation.

Every relationship in the industry is affected by people's awareness of the gray list. No one is sure where he stands or whom he can trust. Fear determines the proper warmth with which to greet an old friend, the proper line to take on a story, with whom it is wise to be seen having lunch. A social boycott reinforces the graylisting of workers.

One deplorable result is the great decrease of political interest and political activity in Hollywood. The Film Division of the Council of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions was once the most active division; today it is the least active. At political meetings in Los Angeles Hollywood figures used to appear on the platform as a matter of course; today it is almost impossible to enlist the services of a star for any political affair. A few big names, so-called, came out for Dewey in 1948, and a handful of stars sought to rehabilitate themselves in the eyes of their employers by supporting Truman, but in general the collapse of the left in Hollywood has meant the end of political activity. The talent groups, by and large, have not gone over to reaction; they have simply disintegrated as a liberal force.

Even the extreme right-wing organizations are quiescent. The Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals has done practically nothing since its spokesmen "fingered" the ten Hollywood writers in the Washington hearings except sponsor poorly attended meetings for Robert Stripling, Hedda Hopper, and Elizabeth Bentley. The extreme right, in fact, seems to be riddled with dissension. Some directors of the Alliance are convinced that other directors are secretly sympathetic to "the welfare state." One director is even suspected of being a Democrat. Those who remember the effective role that Hollywood played in the Roosevelt campaigns must regret the present gray doldrums. In one sense, the situation is highly paradoxical, for Hollywood has ceased to be interested in politics precisely when politics are exercising an extraordinary influence on everyone connected with the motion-picture industry.

From 1920 to 1940 the production of motion pictures occupied a largely marginal position in American industry and finance. Although the bargaining power of the workers was atomized by a pattern of crazy craft unionism, the profits of the industry were so enormous that wages remained high. In the last quarter of this

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period the craft unions tended to merge, as was shown by the formation of the Conference of Studio Unions; even the weakest talent groups were organized; and Hollywood became intensely political. The moguls of the industry were beginning to feel the "discipline" of New York finance, but they remained fairly tolerant of politics and trade-unionism during most of the war years, when it was almost impossible to lose money in film-making.

In March, 1945, the producers manipulated the Conference of Studio Unions and its affiliates into calling a disastrous strike which lasted through November, 1945, and was resumed in 1946. The result was the complete destruction of the conference and the disintegration of many of its affiliates. Thousands of workers lost the savings of a lifetime; literally hundreds of strikers were placed on trial. The names of persons in the talent groups who supported this strike form the nucleus of the present gray list.

After this débâcle about all that remained of the left wing in Hollywood was a group of articulate and influential members of the Screen Writers' Guild. The pocket of resistance they formed was quickly wiped out. The Motion Picture Alliance raised a clamor about "communism in Hollywood," which was quickly picked up by the Hearst press and eventually by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. At first the industry was reluctant to discharge and blacklist the ten writers cited for contempt for refusing to answer the committee's questions, but at a meeting held, appropriately, in New York its representatives were reminded that Hollywood no longer occupied a marginal position in the general scheme of American business. The gray list acts as a phantom Un-American Activities Committee in Hollywood today.

There is also, of course, a gray list for themes. One of the finest directors in the industry, an Academy Award winner, told me the other day that the studios have rejected almost every idea he has suggested in the last two years with the remark, "Can't you find a good love story?" The only bright spots in Hollywood's recent production record are a few pictures like "The Champion," "Pinky," and "Home of the Brave." The last two deal with the race question and, significantly, have been highly successful. Racial tolerance is apparently the one controversial theme that may be presented from the liberal or progressive point of view. On the other hand, "The Red Menace" and "I Married a Communist" have been dismal failures.

Faced with a shrinking world market, the industry is rapidly narrowing the domestic market by its slavish adherence to tepid themes and silly plots. People are treating Hollywood pictures as Hollywood treats its finest talent, patronizing them "occasionally" and puting most of them on a gray list.

No Comment

CIVILIZATION'S great need is to get back to simple, homespun, down-to-earth things, Dr. James W. Fifield, Jr., pastor of [the Los Angeles] First Congregational Church [and founder of Spiritual Mobilization], declared in his sermon yesterday. . . . The American scene contains many great but simple persons who head large corporations or other posts of responsibility, he said. They . . . are for the most part unsophisticated, unpretentious, self-effacing, retiring people, he declared.—From the Los Angeles *Times*, October 24.

"LET'S GET DOWN to fundamentals. War is not murder of a civilian enemy population. The first objective of war is peace. The second and immediate objective is . . . to conquer the people, impose our high strategy on their political ideas, use their industrial installations for our purposes, and make the conquered enemy work for us."—General Henry J. Reilly (ret.) as quoted by John O'Donnell in the New York *Daily News*, September 25.

APPARENTLY, an irate citizen protests, you have to be a Democrat or Republican or you don't vote in the [San Francisco] city elections on November 8. The gent, . . . a city employee himself, says that four of his friends wanted to register in the Wallace Progressive Party. "Democrat or Republican?" insisted the deputy in the City Hall. . . . "I have my instructions," he declared. At a downtown registration booth the attendant flatly stated, "That party is no longer in existence." When they demurred, he exploded, "What are you, a red or a Communist?" (Note: There are four official parties in this state—Democrat, Republican, Progressive, and Prohibition.)—Jack Rosenbaum in the San Francisco *News*, September 20.

THIS GROUP . . . included men from many walks of life and members of all political faiths, both Democrats and Republicans.—From a statement by Governor William Tuck of Virginia supporting the recommendations of a state commission on suffrage amendments.

A LOCAL REPUBLICAN leader thought he'd go fancy and write a speech minus the city committee's ghost writers. . . . He wanted to . . blast the Demos for leading us to "statism"—only he didn't know what it meant. Turning to Webster's Unabridged, he quickly dropped the idea, because on page 2,462 it's defined as: "Belief in a state government, as in a republic, in contrast with belief in communism or a soviet government."—From the Philadelphia Evening *Bulletin*, September 26.

P. M. CHERNESHOV of the Soviet Union, whose country enjoys preferential tariffs within a closed trading bloc, supported the Cuban delegation with a general argument in favor of protection, citing as a supporting authority Senator Robert A. Taft, Republican, of Ohio.—From the New York *Times*, October 19.

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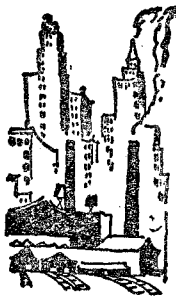

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Farmers and Consumers

ON OCTOBER 8 I devoted this page to criticism of farm plans then before Congress and suggested that the present combination of high food prices and expensively financed surpluses pointed to a need for recasting agricultural policy. I realized that in trying to write objectively about this problem I was sticking my neck out, but I hardly expected to find myself accused of aping United States Chamber of Commerce propaganda, as I have been by a North Dakota reader, Harold V. Knight, in a letter printed on page 500 of this issue. Even more weird was a comment by Rodney Gilbert which appeared in the New York *Herald Tribune* of November 6. Mr. Gilbert, an "expert" on the "leftist" press, persuaded himself that my article heralded a new and inexplicable antagonism to high parity payments on the part of "liberal" writers which made them the bedfellows of "some of the hardest-boiled reactionaries."

Actually, I have been expressing misgivings about federal farm policy in these pages for many years. Moreover, I should think that approval or disapproval of 90 per cent parity is a poor test of political coloration, considering that among those voting for it on October 19 were Senators Wherry and Hickenlooper, whom no one accuses of radicalism. Still, it seems that Messrs. Knight and Gilbert, with their very different outlooks and backgrounds, agree that my views on the question are, to say the least, conservative. Bloody but unbowed, I must therefore try to set the record straight by returning to a discussion of some basic aspects of farm policy.

First let me say I do not oppose government assistance to farmers. Their interests cannot be neglected by any deal, fair, new, or square, which has as its objective a high level of stable prosperity for the whole country, and their livelihoods must not be left to the mercy of the so-called free market. That does not mean, however, that every farmer has a prescriptive right to a guaranteed minimum income whether there is a demand for what he produces or not.

By economic planning and appropriate fiscal and monetary policies the government can, I believe, maintain effective purchasing power at a level corresponding to national productive capacity. If it does so, it will both insure employment for every willing worker and a large and steady market for farm products as a whole. But since it cannot decide how demand will be distributed among many different kinds of goods and services, it can neither promise every worker a job in his customary trade nor underwrite the profitable disposal of every crop.

Farmers, it seems to me, are entitled to a good total market—which is one reason why they should favor full-employment policies—and also to protection against sharp temporary fluctuations in prices, to which their products are particularly exposed. But they cannot expect guaranteed markets for certain products at prices determined by a formula which often seems to have little relation to either present costs or current demand.

Since consumption patterns are constantly changing, we must not allow production patterns to be frozen. For instance, the rise in average real incomes in the past ten years has led to a more varied diet rather than a greater caloric intake. Thus per capita demand for bread, sugar, and other starches has tended to decline, while that for high-grade proteins has increased. Again, rapid development of synthetic textiles has cut into the market for natural fibers. Has farm planning taken full account of such shifts in consumer preferences? I do not think so. The parity program has tended to encourage growers of wheat and cotton to stick by these crops instead of switching to other products for which demand is more elastic.

I agree with Mr. Knight that there is much to be said for the Brannan plan as an alternative approach, although I believe it requires a good many amendments. It would allow market prices of perishable commodities to be fixed by supply and demand, thus enabling consumers to get the benefit of abundance, and would compensate farmers, when necessary, by production payments which made up the difference between actual prices and parity prices. Thus the consumer would not pay twice over, once at the store and once to the tax collector, as he does at present, in order to assist the farmers.

Neither Mr. Brannan nor anyone else has been able to estimate exactly what would be the cost of this plan to the Treasury. It would depend very much on what steps were taken to prevent supply from getting out of hand. Provided we maintain a high level of employment, I suspect that a relatively small fall in prices would greatly strengthen effective demand for meat, eggs, and dairy products and so limit the gap to be filled by production payments. However, if the plan is again considered by Congress, Mr. Brannan's original idea for a ceiling on total payments made to any one farmer should be reinstated: otherwise the program might very well run into trouble when taxpayers discovered that huge government checks were being paid to large commercial farmers even though they were earning handsome returns at market prices.

The Brannan scheme proposes support for storable crops —wheat, cotton, tobacco, and so forth—by government loans and purchases very much as at present. That, I venture to suggest, is another mistake. It would be better to allow prices of these commodities too to find their market level, so that we could get a true picture of demand, domestic and foreign, as a guide to future production programs.

Speaking on November 8 to the National Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation, Secretary of Agriculture Brannan said: "I ask you if an industry which receives the benefit of price supports does not have a grave responsibility to do anything in its power to plan for the efficient and wise use of its products?" Surely such planning must be based on the idea that we produce for the sake of consumption. Some producers—and not only farmers by any means—are inclined to imagine that the converse of this proposition is true.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Essays and Asides

OUT OF THE WHALE

BY LESLIE A. FIEDLER

THE astonishing mass of writing about Melville that has accumulated in the scant thirty years since his literary resurrection has been often enough remarked on, but its bulk has sometimes been allowed to conceal its inadequacy. Melville is an extraordinarily good writer with a kind of tough moral lucidity—strangely intertwined with the sort of talent for exploiting chaos more customary in our writers—rare in American authors. He is even, as Richard Chase has recently dared to point out, intelligent! But the largest part of the critical writing about his work does not, it seems to me, measure up to that intelligence, choosing rather to take off from the murkier edges of his symbolism, dark answering dark, or to indulge in responses less methodical than dithyrambic, from Raymond Weaver at the beginning of the boom to Charles Olson just a year or two ago.

Even behind a presumably safe and scholarly quest for sources like Howard P. Vincent's "The Trying Out of Moby-Dick" (Houghton Mifflin, $5) there lurks the same embarrassing over-enthusiasm that keeps so many responses to Melville down on the soggy level of "appreciation." "It was a gracious fate," Mr. Vincent writes, licking his literary chops, "that has kept such a subject—surely the richest in literary scholarship—untouched for me." What his precise subject is we shall see later; at this point let us merely remark the tone and follow Mr. Vincent farther. "Melville, however, has swallowed me Jonah fashion, and I have yet to get out of the belly of the whale." The figure is, in a way that Mr. Vincent did not intend, apt not only for him but for much recent critical commentary on Melville. The critic has been swallowed by the whale, when the point is, of course, for the swallowing to work just the other way. It is, indeed, not easy to catch Leviathan with a hook, much less to serve him up, but no critic can beg off from that difficult feat. Canticles from the belly are no substitute!

It is love, to be sure, which alone legitimately takes a critic to a work of art, but it is method which brings him out again and enables him to send us back to it with our own measure of love. The strange failure of Melville critics to find such a method is something which has by now become a part of the problem he presents. Indeed, a just understanding of the precise way in which criticism habitually fails before a writer often provides a clue to a way of repairing that failure.

In the meantime Melville has oddly profited by the lack of precise definition which besets most writing about him in managing to become *everybody's* writer. No literary revival in our time has been so amazingly non-factional. In a world of critical either-ors—Henry James *or* Mark Twain, Whitman *or* Poe, Robert Hillyer *or* Ezra Pound—Melville has managed to please everyone. In the schools, in the little magazines, in scholarly journals, and in the periodicals that dignify philistinism no dissenting voice has been raised.

While Mr. Chase has been publishing chapters of his "mythical" approach to Melville's work, Howard Mumford Jones—in the dismal twenty-fifth anniversary issue of the *Saturday Review of Literature*—has been scorning all attempts to come to terms with "Moby-Dick" that use the vocabulary of Freudianism or the methods of myth scholarship. The book, he would have us believe, is essentially nothing more formidable than "a good yarn." This belief is, of course, shared by Somerset Maugham, who threatens to cut out of "Moby-Dick" not only all its cetology but such embarrassing metaphysical passages as the remarks on the whiteness of the whale, which encourage the less stable to speculate on symbolism, folklore, and the like.

And yet Messrs. Chase, Maugham, and Jones can all assert that they like "Moby-Dick." There is something heartening, after all, in our divided world in their assertion that they, who cannot at all communicate with each other, are all in touch with Herman Melville. That their united front is based on nothing more secure than confusion is of course to be regretted; and one suspects that if they moved on from "Moby-Dick" to "Pierre" or "Clarel" or, God forbid, "The Confidence-Man," even their superficial agreement would quite disappear.

It is a real pleasure to one who insists on believing that, for clarity's sake, not peace but the sword is necessary in the kingdom of literature, to note the republication of "The Confidence-Man" (Grove Press, $1.25), the least understood, the most despised, the most readily scanted of Melville's books. It is a pity that the publishers have chosen to print it without an introduction; most readers will need a hand. A glance through Melville criticism would reveal on the part of his most sympathetic expounders a series of frank misreadings and evasions of the cagiest and most transparent sort. I know of only one full-scale attempt to deal with the significance of this most extraordinary book, that of Richard Chase, who gives its shrewdness and symbolic richness due credit, and whose ambitious and sensitive reading is marred only by being basically wrong. But he is wrong so much more boldly and rewardingly than anyone else has known how to be that it would be a shame to hold it against him.

I have always read the book as a study of how a Christ, come into Melville's world, *our* world, after all, would soon discover the impossibility of persuading us to have "confidence"—the degraded word for "faith" which is the best we can afford—in the masquerades of humility, the pale sufferer, or the oppressed Negro; and would learn to put on the guise of a flamboyant and successful operator to *bamboozle* us into belief. I cannot see in the Confi-

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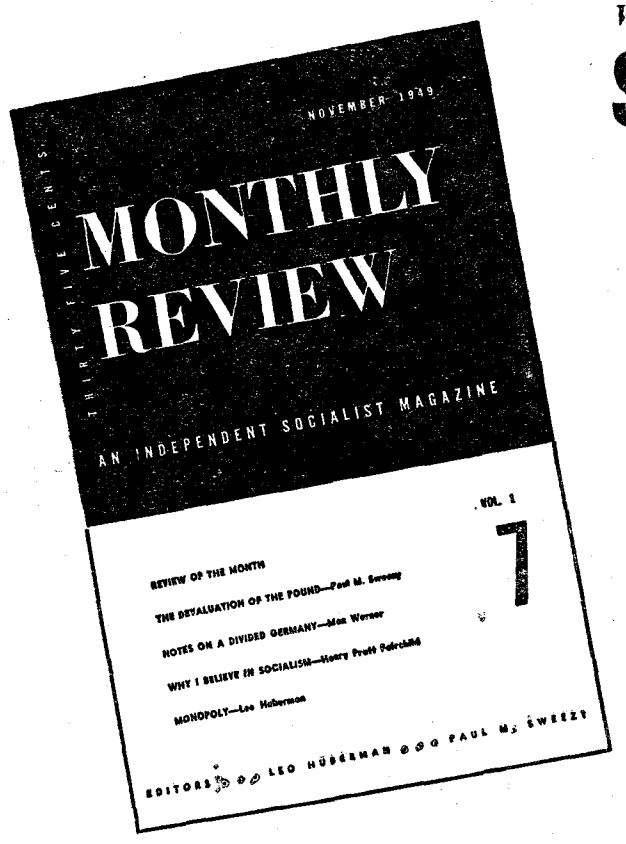
dence Man a villain, even Mr. Chase's villain as "liberal." If he can be accused of fraud at all, it is only in his contention that trust and generosity somehow pay; that is, as Jesus himself might be considered a fraud to the modern for whom God is dead. Melville himself, and here is the clue to the primary ambiguity of the book, was just not sure. At any rate, I find "The Confidence-Man" in a new edition a greater contribution (if only people would read it!) to an understanding of Melville than "The Trying-out of Moby-Dick," which, to exploit its own figure, yields some oil, more blubber—but surely no ambergris!

There are pleasures, minor but real, in source-hunting, and in J. L. Lowes's "Road to Xanadu," for instance, the disclosure of the buried sources of Coleridge's dream-poem makes a graceful and satisfactory book. But Mr. Vincent is not content with the simple sniffing out of sources; he promises to show us *how* Melville transmuted the crude material he found in whaling books into great art; and this he does not do, merely placing side by side the words of the cetologists and the words of the novelist, demonstrating what we had known to begin with, that much indifferent matter is mysteriously transmuted in creating a work of art.

That this leads to no deeper understanding of the experience of the book Mr. Vincent seems to realize, and he surrounds the center of his book, whose charms are those of careful detective work neatly executed, with passages of partly developed exegesis and criticism and quotations from certain *chic* writers ordinarily not mentioned by scholars—Proust, Yeats, Eliot, even Arthur Koestler. The old-fashioned laboratory appeal of "research" is thus dissipated in an insecure scurrying after more newfangled kinds of analysis, or more precisely their simulation—and in the end nothing is really achieved.

I find it, finally, a book whose real virtues can be appreciated only if they are detached from the thick pretentiousness in which they are imbedded. I cannot forbear a quotation illustrating Mr. Vincent's method—the penetration into literary scholarship of *Kitsch*—at its most flagrant. Notice the learned quotation to point up a platitude, the occasional inversion of sentence order for a heavy-handed rhetorical effect, and especially the trick of multiple reference, at once carefully classical and up-to-the-minute, and mercilessly inclusive.

Literature and art burgeon with the cry of man facing his own self, isolated from the society about him. As Friedell says, "What are tone-sequences and orders of battles, skirts and regulations, vases and meters, dogmas and shapes of roofs, but the outpoured philosophy of an age?" Most vividly does the isolation theme appear in the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" when, "alone on a wide sea," the mariner cries out that "even God scarce seemed there to be." Aloneness is the theme of La Belle Dame Sans Merci, and it is the dramatic center of Keats's greatest letters. Aloneness looms large in the lyrics of Matthew Arnold and in the better poetry of Tennyson. It is found spread over the black rocks of Eliot's waste land, and so frequently has it been voiced in modern poetry that Louis MacNeice complains: "These are the times at which Aloneness is too ripe." Aloneness is painted into the canvases of Blakelock and Ryder, of Chirico and Feininger. It sounds in the harmonic and contrapuntal patterns of Beethoven and Vaughan Wil-



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liams. It is carved into the durable stone of St. Gaudens's masterpiece, the Adams Memorial in Rock Creek Park, Washington. James, Royce, and Dewey have discussed its philosophical aspects; Freud, the psychological. Only a long doctoral dissertation could even ...

Did someone yell, "Uncle!"?

Mrs. Roosevelt Recollects

THIS I REMEMBER. By Eleanor Roosevelt. Harper and Brothers. $4.50.

TO discover the historical revelations contained in Mrs. Roosevelt's autobiography may require at least two readings. The initial encounter with the book is likely to leave even the best-intentioned scholar so disarmed, so hypnotized by the author's personality—her candor, simplicity, and insight—that the objectivity necessary to historical evaluation will hardly be able to assert itself.

Nor can the strong emotional appeal of the book be fully avoided after a second, more analytical reading. "This I Remember" is not a history of an era, its institutions, trends, and consequences. It does not pretend to be: "I feel the times need not be discussed by me, for over and over again the period will be written about by historians." Covering the years 1925 to 1945, it is rather a personal history—an intimate glimpse into the life and problems of a woman who, inextricably caught up in the tide of national and world events, seeks to maintain her individuality as a person, a wife, a mother. Thus affairs of state are often subordinated to the affairs of the household, and the exigencies of national politics often translated into questions of personal tastes and interacting personalities. Mrs. Roosevelt's considerations include such personal problems, large and small, as her children's difficulties in adjusting to the "drawback" of the Roosevelt name, a mother-in-law who was "bent on being head of the family," the lack of cash during the 1933 bank holiday, and the household arrangements for a visit by the British royal family.

The essence of Mrs. Roosevelt's recollection lies in her early recognition that entering the White House "meant the end of any personal life of my own." As wife of the President, she could have no family life, no intimacy; indeed, there was no Eleanor Roosevelt ("I was lost somewhere deep down inside myself"). In a word, she was public property. This personal anonymity, plus the inheritance of a deep sense of history, leads logically to "This I Remember." The reader will be impressed not only by the tragic nature of its author's position ("I was only a symbol ... and lived those years very impersonally") but also by her evident feeling of obligation to future generations ("perhaps I shall be able to give some impressions which may help in the understanding of the stream of history during these complicated years").

Unlike more than one recent contribution to the ever-growing library of Rooseveltiana, "This I Remember" is not motivated by a desire either to justify or to enhance the author's place in the record. It is exactly what the title states. It commences with the recognition that objectivity is not entirely possible, and nowhere is there claim to authority.

This is not to say that all the myriad accusations cast at the Roosevelt family are evaded. With characteristic honesty replies are offered to several of the more complex charges, while the remainder are dismissed as part of the liability of public office. A full chapter is devoted to the author's associations with the American Youth Congress, but the elaboration here appears inspired by a desire to illustrate the plight of youth rather than to defend past actions. In fact, although now aware that for a time she had been deceived, Mrs. Roosevelt is today "extremely grateful" for her A. Y. C. associations, as they have proved "of infinite value to me in understanding some of the tactics I have had to meet in the United Nations!"

The purely historical contribution is of course significant. In addition to the revelations about the President "as an individual," history now possesses another view of such controversies as those about the writing of the 1932 acceptance speech, the third- and fourth-term decisions, the dismantling of Germany, and the transactions at Yalta, as well as of such controversial figures as Alfred E. Smith, Louis Howe, James Farley, and Harry Hopkins. Yet it is equally clear that Mrs. Roosevelt neither sought nor played a leading role in the actual formulation of high-level policy, and thus the political events depicted are only relatively important.

Of greater consequence are the observations concerning the President. Aware that much of the controversy surrounding the Roosevelt era focuses upon its dynamic leader, and even admitting that "other people may know certain sides of Franklin's character ... better than I," Mrs. Roosevelt carefully examines those qualities of her husband which "I know that I feel sure nobody else can know." This is not easy for her. It entails trying to resolve a problem that others have posed but that she does not perceive. For his wife F. D. R. was not a historical enigma; to her it seemed only natural that he acted and thought as he did. Consequently her efforts to interpret the President and trace causative factors are exaggerated—and the historian benefits. His "Delano background," for example, is credited with certain influences, as are Louis Howe, infantile paralysis, Justice Holmes, the governorship of New York, Woodrow Wilson, and Sara Roosevelt.

We find that he disliked "being disagreeable," that "for all of his advanced political theories he clung to the old-fashioned traditions in many curious ways." "I never heard him say there was a problem that he thought it was impossible for human beings to solve." And there is much food for thought in the comment that "it is hard to disassociate his ambition and enjoyment of the science of politics for its own sake from his desire to achieve through political action real gains for the people."

All these contributions were intended by Mrs. Roosevelt, but "This I Remember" will be historically treasured for what is unintentionally disclosed of perhaps the greatest influence in Franklin Roosevelt's life—namely, Eleanor Roosevelt. It is stated at the outset that "consciously ... I never tried to exert any political influence on my husband."

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This is undoubtedly true, although later chapters tell of serving as the President's reporter on living conditions in West Virginia and other areas. The conclusion hints at even more extensive influence: "He might have been happier with a wife who was completely uncritical. That I never was able to be... I think I sometimes acted as a spur, even though the spurring was not always wanted or welcome." But it is apparent that even this is gross understatement; that the stability, simplicity, and dedication evident in the book must necessarily have been a source of inspiration and guidance for F. D. R., indeed, for the era itself. Mrs. Roosevelt may have been a "symbol" during the years she describes, but not of the figurehead variety; rather of a leader in the true, fine sense of the term.

JAMES N. ROSENAU

The Meaning of Maupassant

MAUPASSANT: A LION IN THE PATH. By Francis Steegmuller. Random House. $5.

WHEN a few years ago Professor Artine Artinian sent round his excellent Maupassant questionnaire, I was compelled to answer: I have no definite opinion about Maupassant. I have not read anything of his for well over thirty years. And I feel no inclination to pick him up again now.

Well, Francis Steegmuller has sent me back to Maupassant. This is the surest test of good criticism. Steegmuller, as he did so excellently in his "Flaubert and Madame Bovary," combines biography, interpretation, appreciation. The gift is rare. Some readable biographies are merely anecdotal. Paul Hazard's "Stendhal," a masterly study of frustration, would not be different if Stendhal had never written a book. Here, on the contrary, life, career, achievement are closely interwoven.

The key to Maupassant, according to Steegmuller, is the disastrous wedded life of his parents. He idealized his mother and despised his father. At the core of his work, particularly in "Yvette" and "Une Vie," but even in "Boule de suif," we find that "pity for women" which Montherlant derides. Yet he himself was the predatory, utterly selfish male—a Bel-Ami, as he jokingly boasted.

Steegmuller greatly respects Flaubert: in this book we find the aging hermit of Croisset at his best—devoted to his art, indifferent to worldly rewards, unselfishly rejoicing in the success of his disciple Maupassant, almost an adopted son. In comparison, the younger man comes out badly: a careerist who used the Zola group to break into literature, then loftily proclaimed his independence; a wholesale manufacturer who turned out tales by the hundred for the equivocal clientèle of a boulevard paper like *Gil Blas*; a man notorious for the incurable vulgarity of his pleasures, his manners, and his thought, who later veered toward high society and poached on Paul Bourget's preserves. Like Leverkühn in "Dr. Faustus"—but with far better cause—he had a spirochete working its inexorable way through his spine. He may have been born in a château; but he lived like a huckster on a spree, and ended as a snob.

Yet he is Maupassant, as Verlaine is Verlaine. Reading over a number of his stories, I was impressed as I was in my youth; and Steegmuller a long generation later had with some reluctance to acknowledge mastery. I am glad he exposes the fallacy which makes Maupassant a French O. Henry, the virtuoso of trick endings; "La Parure" is an exception. Most of his stories have the directness of Chekhov's or Katherine Mansfield's. Against Rachel Bespaloff—a good judge of Homer—I do not care for his peasant tales: the coarseness is too sustained. Of his six novels three—"Une Vie," "Bel-Ami," "Pierre et Jean"—are very high achievements; and I confess that in my teens I liked "Fort comme la mort," which I would not dare to read again. Like Colette at her best, he makes us forget art altogether. It is not "the humble truth," as he claimed, still less "the arrogant truth"; it is plain truth. And this could not be said of his fellow-Naturalists—the Goncourts, Zola, Daudet. You react to his works as you would to life; you may be disgusted, but it is not him you blame. And beyond this life, so rough and so mean, there is absolutely nothing but the dark. *Fin de siècle* nihilism never was expressed with such perfect purity; his total absence of philosophy makes him timeless.

There is but one positive element in that Stygian gloom, besides the tragic

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quest for pleasure; and that is *dated* with extreme definiteness. He was a rabid *chauvin,* and like Déroulède, lived in the hope of settling accounts with the Prussians. In the heaven of Charles Maurras, there might be a mansion for his soul. It would serve him right.

ALBERT GUÉRARD

Drama

MARGARET MARSHALL

"I KNOW MY LOVE" (Shubert Theater) is an adaptation by S. N. Behrman of a play by Marcel Achard. Its French derivation may account for the frame of sophistication which Mr. Behrman and the Lunts find so congenial, but it is otherwise not discernible. On the other hand, though the scene has been shifted to Boston, I doubt whether even as late as 1920 a matron of that city, unless she was an accepted outlander such as an opera singer or an actress, would, for instance, have "handled" her husband's extra-marital excursions as Emily Chanler does. The play—and the characters—are neither here nor there as far as any actual locale is concerned; and the play is not really a play. It is a sort of marital cavalcade consisting of a series of episodes from the lives of a couple who have been married for fifty years. It opens with a celebration of their golden anniversary. This rules out any suspense about how it will all come out, and one's emotions are stirred only in an academic way by the crises in the Chanlers' lives, some of them quite serious, which are depicted in the sequence of scenes. These scenes take place in the elegant drawing-room of the family mansion which had been Emily's home before her marriage; the fact that Thomas, her husband, wanted to be a writer but had taken over Emily's father's textile business and his mansion too is not a matter of comment, except for the observation that Thomas would have been as successful as a writer as he is as a textile manufacturer. There are no real problems, material or spiritual.

To see the weakness of the play as play one has only to imagine it acted by an amateur dramatic society. But this is also a way of saying that only accomplished actors could keep the bubble afloat for two and a half hours. "I Know My Love" is frankly an exhibition piece arranged for the acting and the acting together of Miss Fontanne and Mr. Lunt, and the suspense and pleasure arise from observing their points.

Miss Fontanne's performance is the better of the two, and it is very good indeed. It is all of a piece and there are no loose ends. She creates a single illusion into which no inflection or movement that might suggest any other illusion is allowed to intrude (though her costume in the first episode is a little too funny and therefore distracting); and no inflection or movement which might suggest that she is Lynn Fontanne and not Emily Chanler. This last seems to me the hallmark of any actor or actress worthy of the name, for it indicates a devotion to a discipline, a conviction that the part in hand is for the moment the most important thing in the world, which is essential to art in any medium. Finally Miss Fontanne has a control that shows itself only in ease.

Mr. Lunt's part, as written, is subsidiary to Miss Fontanne's, but his acting is also less expert—the control less sure, the illusion less self-contained. He bumbles a bit and never quite disappears into the part he is playing.

Still, I enjoyed the exhibition, and the skill of the Lunts inspired respect as well as pleasure. It was not for nothing, I thought, that they had spent a lifetime in the service of the theater.

Or was it? And why, if they were proud and not merely vain of their profession, were they content, at the latter end of a fabulously successful career, when they could surely command *any* vehicle, with a carriage-and-four affair that in itself is so very inconsequential? Why weren't they insisting on something better, on Shakespeare or Shaw? On something better, for that matter, from S. N. Behrman? It may be argued that the demand for good dramatic fare is as slim as the current supply of it. But surely actors as unquestioningly accepted as the Lunts have a responsibility to create a demand, or do their bit to create one, for the best examples of the art to which they are committed.

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Records

B. H. HAGGIN

FROM RCA Victor comes one of the year's outstanding recordings—of Stravinsky's "Orpheus" performed by a Victor orchestra under his direction. This is music which, for all its use of elements of Stravinsky's late style, is essentially of the kind of "L'Oiseau de feu" and "Le Baiser de la fée—music, that is, for a stage work, which is unlike most of his music in being, for its dramatic purposes, directly expressive, and which includes pages as hauntingly lovely and touching and as dramatically powerful as some in "L'Oiseau" and "Le Baiser." The performance is characteristically clear and strong, and is excellently reproduced by the 78 r.p.m. records (DM-1319, 4 12″).

Outstanding also is the recording of Haydn's Symphony No. 93 performed by Guido Cantelli with the N. B. C. Symphony. The work is one of the great examples of the Haydn method at its point of highest development; its dramatic surprises and high spirits are realized in a performance with the continuity of impetus, phrase-outline, and structure, the clarity of texture, the precision of execution that we have heard in Toscanini's performances; and it is well reproduced by the 78 r.p.m. records (DM-1323, 3 12″) except for excessive sharpness which requires drastic reduction of treble.

As it happens, the Haydn Society has issued on three LP records a number of early symphonies of Haydn performed by the Vienna Symphony under Jonathan Sternberg. On the first (1001, $5.95) are No. 1 (1759), a series of inconsequential gestures of the period; No. 13 (1763), with a bolder style of gestures in the first movement, a quite fine *cantabile* slow movement, the beginnings of the Haydn playfulness in the minuet, and elaborate development of the theme of the finale; and No. 28 (1765), with a first movement interesting in its unceasing play with its single theme, and a very fine slow movement. The second (1002) offers No. 31 ("Horn Signal") (1765), which has been performed in New York, with a first movement in which there are, among the gestures and flourishes, momentary interludes with striking modulations characteristic of Haydn, a lovely and elaborate slow movement, a fine minuet, and a fine concluding theme and variations whose theme is so short that the movement is damaged by the omission of repeats and the long pauses between variations in the performance; and No. 34 (1766), remarkable for its long, elaborate slow first movement with its characteristic irregularities of phrase-length and form. And the third (1003) offers Nos. 44 ("Trauer") and 48 ("Maria Theresia") (1772). The accompanying notes point out that these two are products of the matured powers of the artist of forty; and it is true that they are impressive works, and that one hears those powers in, among other things, the daring surprises of style and harmony of the first movement of No. 48—for example, the way the C major flourishes of the opening statement end quietly, with a momentary shift into and out of minor. But one has to recognize that one is not hearing what those powers achieve after twenty years' further development, in works like No. 93.

The performances are simple playing of the notes by competent musicians; and their recorded sound is good except for occasional sharpness which requires reduction of treble. In the early symphonies a harpsichord is used, as it was in Haydn's day, to fill out the harmony; but since it is inaudible most of the time its purpose is not achieved; and a better way of achieving it nowadays would be to follow Carse's suggestion in his book "The Orchestra in the Eighteenth Century" and complete the harmony in the string parts.

Cetra-Soria's LP version of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" performed by Molinari with Santa Cecilia Orchestra (50004, $5.95) is free of the excessive weight of bass of the 78 r.p.m. original; but there is some variation in volume-level and considerable surface-noise at times. Treble must be reduced for the LP record (40003, $4.75) with two charming Respighi works, "The Birds" and the First Suite of Old Dances and Airs (treble must be increased again for the end of this piece), which are well performed by EIAR Symphony under Ferrero and Failoni.

From Columbia there are the lovely Haydn-Brahms Variations, well performed by Ormandy with the Philadelphia Orchestra and well reproduced, except for occasional obscured details, on LP (ML-2066), but idiotically coupled with Liszt's "Les Preludes." And Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony in a performance by Bruno Walter with the New York Philharmonic which is more straightforward than usual but at its best lacks vital energy and at its worst is soft and slack, and whose recorded sound on LP (ML-4228)—with treble reduced and bass boosted—lacks warmth and is raucously confused at climaxes.

From Victor there is Strauss's "Ein Heldenleben," performed in too matter-of-fact fashion at times—e.g., the introduction—by Beecham with the Royal Philharmonic, and well reproduced by the 78 r.p.m. records (DM-1321, 5 12″). And Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony, worse performed by Koussevitzky with the Boston Symphony than I recall, and excellently reproduced by the 78 r.p.m. records (DM-1318, 5 12″), but with some bad breaks in the music at the ends of records.

IMPORTED RECORDINGS

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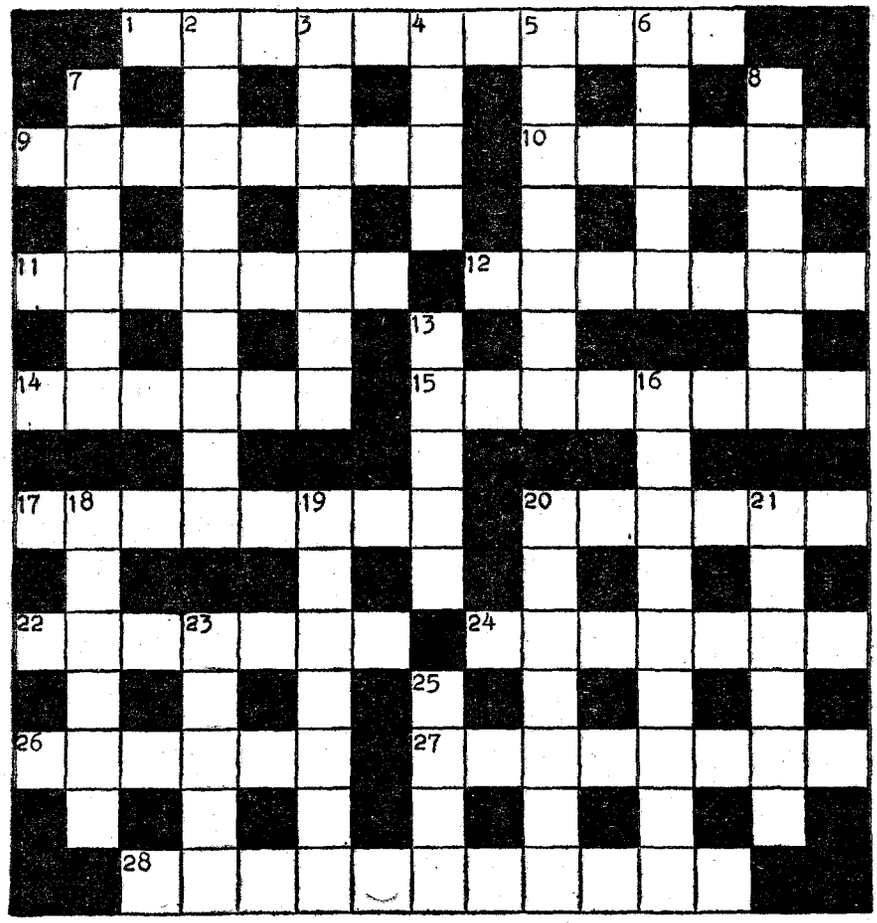
Crossword Puzzle No. 337

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Not the only lost ewe associated with 28. (11)
9 The mountain that might be the mouse? (8)
10 A spritely tune? (6)
11 Sounds like a lot of hay is pernicious. (7)
12 The speech of the *Citadel*. (7)
14 Sounds like from foot to patella is red. (6)
15 Brewster's was novel. (8)
17 A morality play with its name very much changed. (8)
20 A Minnesotan might suggest a party to her. (6)
22 Sit and eat? Assume the reverse! (7)
24 One of Nietzsche's two great European narcotics. (7)
26 He seems to keep his hand in army material. (6)
27 It's enough with sex of a sort around to create problems. (8)
28 Darby and Joan were first and last. (3, 8)

DOWN

2 He has to go some to catch 28 in the act. (9)
3 Over-confident wreath. (7)
4 Turn to London for its call. (4)
5 A quartet in a test of no consequence. (7)
6 The kingdom of 23. (5)
7 Colon at one end of this. (6)
8 Gem of an agency of mercy in Palestine. (6)
13 A patch to improve. (5)
16 One of the things Chopin did without practice. (9)
18 This Monroe's Doctrine seems to be a lunar clause. (6)
19 It's morning when it rises with a very loud indication for the dog. (7)
20 A log hit—hit by a rock. (7)
21 Caller, passing inspection and always around. (6)
23 One way to board a plane. (5)
25 Pike carried overhead by French soldiers. (4)

* * *

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 336

ACROSS:—1 BARGAIN COUNTER; 9 TUTORED; 10 TACITUS; 11 and 25 ELAINE THE FAIR; 12 AFFECTED; 14 TAMPICO; 15 CRESS; 17 TOPIC; 19 HERETIC; 21 and 23 SHARE THE WEALTH; 26 BRIMMED; 27: AURORA BOREALIS.

DOWN:—1 BUTTERFAT; 2 RETRACT; 3 AGRONOMIC; 4 NODE; 5 OUT-OF-DOORS; 6 NACRE; 7 ENTITLE; 8 USED; 13 DIPHTHERIA; 15 CATHERINE; 16 SUNSHADES; 18 PLATEAU; 20 CALOMEL; 21 SATE; 22 ERATO; 24 EBRO.

Readers are invited to send for a free copy of Mr. Lewis's "ground rules." Address requests to Puzzle Dept., The Nation, 20 Vesey Street, New York 7, New York

Letters to the Editors

The Farmer's View

Dear Sirs: If Keith Hutchison's article, Red Light For Farmers, [*Nation*, October 8] had appeared in almost any other paper than your own, it would hardly rate a reply, for most of the press is as much opposed to high incomes for farmers as for labor. But it is surprising to find a liberal magazine like *The Nation* expounding the view that even under the "60 per cent" Hope-Aiken bill farmers would have got too much. It is as if *The Nation* should advocate a wage cut because the prices of automobiles and so on are too high.

The egg situation is admittedly a mess, but is 35 cents a dozen, the average support price, too much for a farmer to receive these days? What the farmers cannot understand is why the price to the consumer should be twice the prewar figure—upward of 90 cents a dozen. What is needed, obviously, is increased consumption, and Secretary Brannan's plan to let market prices fall of their own weight and make up the difference in production payments probably would not cost any more than the present program of drying eggs nobody wants. But the Hope-Aiken bill's method of dealing with eggs would have reduced the price until the small commercial poultrymen were forced to the wall. (Farm flocks would probably increase, because in a period of hard times farm wives simply work harder to raise more chickens to try to help make ends meet. Low farm prices do not curtail production, but they do drive farmers into bankruptcy.)

I admit that the present parity formula should be brought up to date, but one may certainly challenge the assumption that parity prices would be lowered as a result of modifications which allow for technological advances. Wheat is one thoroughly mechanized crop. The wheat farmer must invest thousands of dollars in combines, tractors, trucks, and other equipment. Yet in determining parity insignificant weight is given to the cost of machinery—no more than when all the wheat farmer needed was a horse-drawn binder and sulky plow. To give farm machinery the relative weight it actually occupies in grain farming would raise, not lower, the parity price, probably to a degree more than offsetting any average increase in yield.

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GENTLEMAN, Western European background, cultured, adventurous, many interests, would like to correspond with interesting, attractive, broadminded lady. Box 152 c/o The Nation.

Parity of income is, moreover, a fairer measure than parity of price. (Prices may stay up, but if farmers must cut production, their income suffers.) Are farmers getting too much? Or are they, like labor, entitled to a rising standard of living? Look at the farm census figures for 1944. That was not the best year farmers had, but it was a very good income year. North Dakota had one of the highest per capita farm incomes in the United States. Yet that year the average North Dakota *gross* income was $5,663 and two-thirds of the farmers in the state received less than this. Net income probably averages less than half the gross.

Is $54 a week too much for a man and his family to receive for much more than forty hours of work? And remember that in many years of smaller production the farmer's income is far less. There is much to commend Secretary Brannan's proposal to tie parity prices to the average farm income of the preceding ten years.

Mr. Hutchison's statement that "support prices fixed at a high percentage of parity afford a large enough margin of profit to stimulate overproduction" sounds like propaganda from the United States Chamber of Commerce, whose agricultural policy is to bring farm prices down so low that about half of our six million farmers will be forced out of commercial production. The Hope-Aiken bill, which Mr. Hutchison calls the best of the proposed farm programs, went a long way toward this same end.

Family-type farmers, working through organizations like the Farmers' Union, are seeking full 100 per cent parity, for anything less than a fair price is an unfair price. They like the approach of the Brannan plan, which seeks to stimulate consumption so that all Americans may have a high standard of nutrition and to shift production to those commodities necessary to its maintenance. There may be temporary overproduction of some commodities, but during a period of years a stockpile in the ever-normal storehouse is most welcome. We need a farm program based on abundance, with true soil conservation increasing production over the long pull, not one based on scarcity and violent price swings.

HAROLD V. KNIGHT

Jamestown, N. D., October 10

[Keith Hutchison discusses the issues raised by Mr. Knight in Everybody's Business on page 493.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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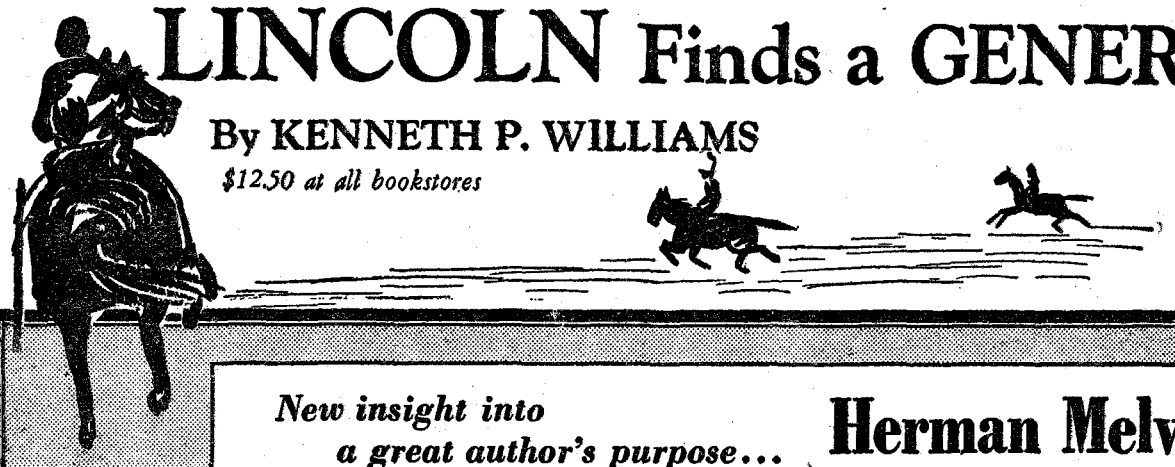

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